

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
FOR THE DISTRICT OF MASSACHUSETTS

ESTATE OF ROBERT E. BLAIS, et al.	)	No. 20-CV-30115
	)	
Plaintiffs	)	
	)	
v.	)	
	)	
BENNETT WALSH, et al.	)	
	)	
Defendants	)	

NOTICE OF SETTLEMENT AND  
JOINT MOTION TO STAY PROCEEDINGS

The parties hereby (1) notify this Court that they have reached an agreement upon settlement terms that will be memorialized in a proposed Class Settlement Agreement, and (2) ask the Court to stay all proceedings pending the parties' efforts to fully resolve this dispute. The parties further agree that, if the case does not settle, the parties will be restored to the same position that they were in prior to the Order staying the proceedings. As grounds for this motion, the parties state as follows:

1. The estate of Joseph Sniadach, filed this civil rights lawsuit as a putative class action on July 17, 2020, against five defendants, four of whom formerly served on the executive leadership team of the Soldiers' Home in Holyoke (the "Home"): Bennett Walsh, former Superintendent of the Home; David Clinton, former Medical Director of the Home; Vanessa Lauziere, former

Chief Nursing Officer of the Home; and Celeste Surreira, former Assistant Director of Nursing of the Home; and a fifth defendant, Francisco Ureña, the former Secretary of the Department of Veterans' Services for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. ECF No. 1.

2. On December 23, 2020, the estate of Stanley Chiz filed a separate lawsuit against the same defendants based on the same legal theory, No. 20-cv-30194-MGM.

3. On January 25, 2021, the parties filed a Joint Motion to consolidate the Sniadach and Chiz actions, ECF No. 12, which the Court allowed.

4. On September 20, 2021, Mr. Sniadach filed a motion to amend his Complaint to add several named-Plaintiffs and a sixth defendant, ECF No. 31, which the Court allowed.

5. The parties have filed several joint motions to extend the deadline for the Defendants to file responsive pleadings, which the Court has allowed.

6. From November 2021 through the present, counsel for the plaintiffs have engaged in intensive negotiations with counsel for the Commonwealth to reach an agreement as to settlement terms. The negotiations proved successful and on May 5, 2022, the parties executed a Settlement Term Sheet setting forth the parameters of the settlement terms.

7. In short order, the parties plan to execute a proposed Class Settlement Agreement, which, if approved by the Court, would fully resolve the claims of participating class members.

8. The parties believe that the terms of the proposed Class Settlement Agreement are fair, reasonable, and adequate to protect the interests of the class members.

9. By May 20, 2022, or as soon thereafter as possible, the parties plan to file an Unopposed Motion for an Order Preliminarily Approving the Class Settlement Agreement, Appointing Class Counsel, Appointing a Claims Administrator, and Directing Notice to the Settlement Class, which will include the proposed Class Settlement Agreement.

10. If this dispute is not resolved through this proposed Class Settlement Agreement, for any reason, then, upon the parties' report to the Court of that fact, the stay of the proceedings would be lifted and the litigation of the dispute would continue as if the matter had never been stayed.

WHEREFORE, the parties respectfully request that the Court stay the proceedings pending efforts to certify a Settlement Class and resolve this dispute in accordance with the proposed Class Settlement Agreement.

CERTIFICATE OF COMPLIANCE WITH LOCAL RULE 7.1(a)(2)

The parties hereby certify that they have conferred regarding the foregoing motion and have agreed to jointly file this motion.

Date: May 12, 2022

The Plaintiffs,  
By their attorneys,

*/s/ Michael Aleo*

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CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I, Michael Aleo, hereby certify that, on May 12, 2022, I caused the foregoing document to be filed through the Court's CM/ECF system, a copy of which will be sent to all registered participants by electronic mail.

*/s/ Michael Aleo*

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